

Guide: Grant Application and Project Dossier

The goal of this document is to give you an overview and some tips to simplify the process of putting together a grant application. If you have more questions, please contact us to schedule a consultation so we can discuss your project and grant application together.

GENERAL TIPS

- **Apply early:** Tackle the financing of your project as early on as possible. Funding is rarely available for projects after they have been started, much less after they have been finished. As a general rule, for funding bodies that do not communicate submission deadlines and jury meetings, it is best to submit an application at least 3 months before the project begins. Even if there is a deadline be sure to submit your application before the project begins. What counts as the beginning of a project varies depending on the funding body. GGG Kulturkick considers the beginning of a project to be the first point at which costs are incurred. This rule also serves to protect you, so that you do not begin a project with costs which you cannot pay in the end.
- **Check the funding criteria:** Before you write and submit a project proposal, check the funding criteria and restrictions of the organizations to which you are applying. Make sure that your project meets the criteria to qualify for support and funding from the organization. If the funding body has a clear focus or criteria, it is a good idea to specifically emphasize the aspects of your project which match this focus. This is the best way to convince a funding body to approve your application, as they will clearly be able to see how your project fits in with their overall vision.
- **Complete the application form or write a letter:** The essential components of a grant application include a project dossier (including a budget and a project description), and an application letter or completed application form. If there is no application form on the website of a funding body, you need to write an application letter. This is often the case for foundations or organizations which are only reachable by mail. If there is an application form, then an additional application letter is not necessary, as the essential information will be collected in the form.
- **Contents of an application letter:** You should write and format an application letter like a business letter. It begins by addressing the decision-making body or jury of the organization. This is followed by a short summary of the project with the most relevant information (i.e., idea, timeframe, place, and project initiators). This short summary should also explicitly address the aspects of the project which match the criteria of the funding body to which the letter is addressed. In the last section, the total cost of the project as well as the grant amount requested from the funding body is named. The project dossier and budget are enclosed along with the application letter.
- **Funding for larger projects:** For projects with large budgets and multiple potential sources of funding it is worth planning two or more rounds of grant applications. In the first round, request enough funding in your applications so that, if all are approved, you can completely finance the project. Unfortunately, it is often the case that funding bodies cannot grant the entire amount requested, and an application may even be rejected. In the second-round additional funding bodies are asked grants to finance the rest of project. For second (or third) round applications, include any grants already received in the project budget. An acceptance from one funding body can have a positive impact on the decision making of another, since it shows that the project has already convinced another organization and so the realization of the project appears more likely. Projects which are submitted to GGG Kulturkick very rarely have this scope.

PROJECT DOSSIER

Capturing a project in words is not always easy. For artistic projects, people often try to communicate the vision or message of the project. However, in a project dossier for a grant application, the most important thing is to show that your project is realistic and well planned. In other words: project dossiers are not just blurbs which hint at the content of a project to generate interest, rather they are informative documents which communicate concrete facts and background information, demonstrate artistic decisions, as well as list production schedules and organizational steps.

GENERAL TIPS

- **Not too long and well structured:** It is very likely that your application will be read by people who are reading many other applications on the same day. Keep your dossier short and to the point, but with all the relevant information. As a general rule, a project dossier should not be longer than five pages. An overview of the proposed project including all the facts and basic information at the beginning of the dossier helps readers to quickly grasp your idea. The dossier should also be clearly structured with section headings.
- **State the basics:** Your application will be read by people who do not know you or your project. Describe things which may already be obvious to you in a simple and clear manner.
- **Provide convincing arguments:** Emphasize the unique character of your project to show how the project is different from others & to make clear why your project should be funded.
- **Explain your decisions:** Explaining artistic decisions in your project dossier makes you and your project more concrete for readers. For example, short explanations of why you decided on a specific project title, way of working or place will make the thought-process and goals of your project clearer.
- **Highlight unique aspects of your project:** Short sections of text formatted to stand out, such as in italics, can be inserted into the dossier to highlight parts of your project. This can give you space to communicate the vision and artistic character of your project within the context of a concrete description of your project. These sections can emphasize the artistic character of your project, and help readers develop a feel for your project in a way different from the purely informative sections of your dossier. E.g., lines from the play, song lyrics, or quotes about the project from those involved could be incorporated into the dossier.

STRUCTURE OF A PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The content of a project description is different from project to project. However, every project application must answer three essential questions: 'Who is behind the project?', 'What is the project idea?', and 'How will the project be realized?' Of course, in addition to text, pictures and illustrations can also be used to clarify aspects of the project. The following structure is recommended:

- **Introduction:** A short overview of your project in 2-3 sentences. This should briefly explain the idea, give information about when and where the project will take place and who is involved.
- **WHO? Project Initiator and Team:** Name and birthdate of those involved in the project — Your past experience, interests, and motivation for the project — titles and responsibilities of the people in the project.
- **WHAT? Project idea:** Content and background — way of working — artistic decisions — target group — promotion, documentation and publication.
- **HOW? Project organization:** Timeline (as a table) and steps in the project — space and material needed — third parties involved in the project as technical assistance, etc.
- **Attachments:** If you see fit, or if the funding body requests it, attachments such as scripts, lyrics, photo/video documentation, CVs or portfolios can be sent as part of the project dossier. Make sure to include only those documents which are most relevant to your project.

PROJECT BUDGET

A well planned budget is important to complete your project successfully. In a budget you record which expenses are incurred by your project and how you plan to cover them. This ensures that you always have an overview of the total cost of your project, so that at the end you are not unpleasantly surprised by debt or other financial obligations. In addition, a clear budget demonstrates to potential funding bodies, partners or supporters that your project is well thought through and realistically planned.

A budget always has two parts: expenses and income. For projects which are not profit oriented, the goal is neither to make a profit nor a loss, so the two parts of the budget should balance each other out. In other words, there should be as much income as expenses. To be on the safe side, projects occasionally ask for more funding than the costs budgeted. In this case, you may be contractually obliged to repay any money left over, and this can be noted in your budget.

Budgets should be formatted as a table. You should group expenses and income in a table by category. Comments on the breakdown of costs can be noted in a middle column. The budget is an estimate and is based on preliminary research, discussions and offers.

POSSIBLE EXPENSES:

Materials: set/scenography, props, makeup, building material or hardware, photocopies, etc.

Rentals: Equipment such as cameras, tripods, lights and projectors, speakers, cars etc.

Space: rehearsal rooms, stage/theater rental, exhibition space, etc.

Marketing: Social media or print advertisements, flyers, posters, postage, graphic design etc.

Licensing and permits: music rights (SUISA), copyright, filming permit, access permit etc.

Compensation for participants: expenses such as travel or food expenses, fees, wages

Third-party services: recording, editing, proofreading, mastering etc.

Catering: catering for the project team, opening etc.

Contingency: ca. 10% of the total expenses for unexpected costs.

MÖGLICHE EINNAHMEN:

Income from the project: record or art sales, ticket sales, donation basket, bar profits etc.

Funding from foundations or other organizations: e.g., GGG Kulturkick, etc.

Public funding: Gemeinde and cantonal level funding.

Sponsors: Private companies, banks, etc.

Crowdfunding campaigns.

Other private contributions and donations: gifts from grandparents, parents, etc.

Volunteer work and donated materials.

Own Contributions: band funds, performance fees, prize money, previous sales etc.

This list is necessarily incomplete. Since no two projects are alike, every project will have a unique budget with different costs. However, what is the same for every project is that the budget is always a reflection of the project dossier in numbers. Costs in the budget must be addressed in the project dossier, and whatever is mentioned in the project dossier must be included in the budget.

EXAMPLE BUDGET

EXAMPLE – A play

| Expenses | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Spaces | | 1550 |
| Rehearsal space | 14 days | 0 |
| Large rehearsal space (for choreography) | 5 days x 50 CHF | 250 |
| Theater | 3 performances x 300 CHF | 900 |
| Technician | 4 days x 100 CHF | 400 |
| Scenography and Props | | 1425 |
| Material for set | 10 kubes x 55 CHF (Offcut) | 550 |
| Fabric for set | 30 m x 7 CHF (Offcut) | 200 |
| Hardware | Screws, Staples, etc. | 200 |
| Tools | Drill, Saw, etc. (Leihlager) | 100 |
| Costumes and probs | (thriftd) | 200 |
| Projector | 5 days x 35 CHF (Kulturbüro) | 175 |
| Promotion | | 490 |
| Graphic design | Flat rate (Ben) | 100 |
| Print Flyers (business card sized) | 500 pcs. (Phönix Druckkollektiv) | 70 |
| Print Posters | 150 pcs. (Phönix Druckkollektiv) | 120 |
| Social media advertising | | 200 |
| Documentation | | 135 |
| Filmmaker | Flat rate | 100 |
| Camera Sony Z-5 | 1 day x 35 CHF (Kulturbüro) | 35 |
| Other costs | | 270 |
| Performance licensing | | 250 |
| Copies of script | | 20 |
| Reserve | | 200 |
| Total Expenses | | CHF 4070 |
| Income | | |
| Ticket sales | 150 x 10 CHF | 1500 |
| GGG Kulturkick | Funding requested | 2000 |
| XXX Stiftung | Funding requested | 500 |
| Own contribution* | | 70 |
| Total Income | | CHF 4070 |

*Note: We will pay 70.- ourselves, or the amount left over, if ticket sales turn out differently than expected.